The Hill-billies were part of a vaudeville group that entertained at the Civilian Conservation Corps camps across the Northwest in the 1930s. The group operated under the auspices of the Federal Theatre Project based in Seattle. Imagine the scene: All the factories in a city have been closed by sit-down strikes. Union and management are deadlocked. Enter the local university president, who invites representatives of the various factions of the union into his office to talk it over. But when they arrive he’s not there, and while they wait for him, a microphone they don’t know is live broadcasts their scheming over the radio. Thanks to the president's wily intervention, labor and management settle and the strike is over.

Sound a little far-fetched? Well, believe it or not, it's an actual scene from a play that won a national prize offered by the Federal Theatre Project (FTP), and how it came to be is just one of the fascinating stories that fill The Federal Theatre Project: A Case Study by Drama Professor Barry Witham.